

# CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Swindle 16-9 Well	Proposed Implementation Date: 10/9/2010
Proponent: St. George Coal Co., Inc.	
Type and Purpose of Action: St. George Coal Co., Inc is proposing to drill a Wildcat in the Red River Formation.	
Location: W½W½, E½, Section 16, T28.0N R57.0E	County: Sheridan

## I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

<p>1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.</p>	<p>Board of Oil and Gas received a request to drill. The DNRC/TLMD was petitioned to drill a well under the terms and conditions of the State of Montana lease # OG-39856. St. George Coal Co., Inc. provided a copy of the surface damages settlement signed by the surface owner.</p> <p>On September 14, 2010, DRNC staff performed an inspection. At that time the well pad had been illegally constructed.</p>
<p>2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:</p>	<p>Montana Board of Oil and Gas</p>
<p>3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:</p>	<p>Grant permission for St. George Coal Co. Inc. to construct the well.</p> <p>Deny permission for St. George Coal Co. Inc. to construct the well and require them to reclaim the disturbed area back to original condition.</p>

## II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS
<p>4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p>	<p>N = Not Present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)</p> <p>General Discussion: The well location in CRP lands that have been disturbed for farming activities. The proponent has petitioned FSA to remove a portion of the land from CRP.</p> <p>Action: The action alternative will not affect soil quality, stability or moisture conditions.</p> <p>No-Action: There will be no impacts to these attributes of the landscape.</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
<p>5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?</p>	<p>The area surrounding the well location is considered prairie pothole region. These are important water surface features to migratory birds.</p> <p>Action: By following the Board of Oil and Gas regulatory regulations, water quality, quantity, and distribution will not be influenced.</p> <p>No-Action: There will be no impacts to these attributes of the landscape</p>
<p>6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?</p>	<p>Action: Air quality will be temporarily negatively impacted by implementing the proposed action.</p> <p>No-Action: There will be no impacts to these attributes of the landscape</p>
<p>7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p>	<p>The vegetative community is composed of introduced species.</p> <p>Action: The proposed action will not influence this landscape.</p> <p>No-Action: There will be no impacts to these attributes of the landscape</p>
<p>8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?</p>	<p>This area is not known to have substantial use by important wildlife, birds, or fish</p> <p>Action: Implementation of this action will not affect important wildlife, birds or fish.</p> <p>No-Action: There will be no impacts to these attributes of the landscape</p>
<p>9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern?</p>	<p>Action: Implementation of this action will not affect endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources.</p> <p>No-Action: Implementation of this action will not affect unique, endangered or fragile limited resources.</p>
<p>10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>Action: No known archaeological sites are known to exist. If a surface feature were to exist, ownership of this feature would adhere to the fee owner.</p> <p>No-Action: Implementation of this action will not affect archeological or historical sites.</p>
<p>11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be</p>	<p>Action: It is adjacent to a county road and will be highly visible.</p> <p>No-Action: Implementation of this action will not</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
excessive noise or light?	affect the aesthetics.
12.DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	Action: The project will not use resources that are limited in this area. No-Action: Implementation of this action will not affect the demands on environmental resources of the land.
13.OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	No documents are known to exist Action: Implementation will not affect other environment plans or studies. No-Action: No action will take place.

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14.HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	Action: Temporary human health and safety risks will be added by the implementation of this project. No-Action: No human health or safety risk will be added because no action will be taking place.
15.INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	Action: Implementation will add to industrial activities while decreasing the agricultural value activities of this land. No-Action: By not implementing this action, the industrial production of the land will not be increased while the agricultural activities will remain the same.
16.QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	Action: the Quantity of employment opportunities will increase. No-Action: Employment opportunities will not be created.
17.LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	Action: Implementation of the project will increase the State and local tax base and will also increase trust lands revenue if the well goes into production. No-Action: By not implementing this project, State, local, and Trust revenues will not be increase.
18.DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc)	Action: No demands on government services will be required by this project. No-Action: Government services will not be enhanced.

be needed?	
19.LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	Action: The zoning regulations for this area will not be impacted.  No-Action: The zoning regulations for this area will not be impacted.
20.ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?	Action: There are no wilderness areas in this vicinity. The recreational opportunities will not be impacted due to the fact that the surface owner (fee lands) controls recreational opportunities.  No-Action: No impacts to the quality of recreation and wilderness activities will take place.
21.DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	Action: No additional housing demands are anticipated.  No-Action: No additional housing demands are anticipated.
22.SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	Action: No disruption of native or traditional lifestyles is anticipated.  No-Action: No disruption of native or traditional lifestyles is anticipated.
23.CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	Action: No cultural uniqueness or diversity quality shift is anticipated.  No-Action: No cultural uniqueness or diversity quality shift is anticipated.
24.OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	Action: None  No-Action: None.

EA Checklist Prepared By:  /s/ Hoyt Richards  GUO Manager Date: October 5, 2010

IV. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Action, subject to payment of fine of double the surface damage payment for unauthorized development.
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	No significant impact.

27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis:	
<input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis	

EA Checklist Approved By: Clive Rooney, NELO Area Manager  
Name Title

/s/ Clive Rooney  
Signature

Date: October 5, 2010